

Excerpt from Kurt Wehrmeister, Director of Communications, Anaheim report 2011

Director General Airey and I, and the members of the Supreme Council, have this past year acknowledged what we perhaps have tried to avoid for years . . . that in the media environment of the early 21st century, if the Moose fraternity is going to gain any real traction in building significant institutional awareness among the public . . . we have to invest some of your money in paid media – paid advertising – to help do so.

If we do so intelligently, it is toward the goal not just of “getting our name out there” . . . but of building Awareness of our existence and our mission, hopefully moving quickly into Acceptance of our activities . . . and ultimately and most importantly, translating into Action on the part of the viewing public, to either join with us as members, or to donate toward our endeavors in significant numbers – that, in our case, is what the businesspeople refer to as our ROI – Return On Investment.

And also part of investing intelligently in a public-awareness campaign is to assemble a campaign and staging it in one metropolitan area as a Pilot Program – to test out our message, to see what message or messages work, and which don't so well, and to see what communications media work most effectively and efficiently, and which perhaps don't. This way, we can evaluate afterwards, and make adjustments . . . and then determine whether, and exactly how, we may want to take such an awareness campaign to more metropolitan areas, or even perhaps ultimately all over the continent. We're going to crawl before we walk, and walk before we run.

So here are the nitty-gritty Campaign Objectives for the public-awareness campaign that we're calling “Heard of Moose?” .

First is to very basically “hit the eyes” of people who may never have heard of us at all; to raise general awareness of the existence of Moose and our care of children at Mooseheart, our Moosehaven community for senior members, along with Tommy Moose and all our other Community Service endeavors

Second, to put that information in front of enough people in a given area, often enough, over a given period of time, to create that treasured word-of-mouth “buzz” in the target community; get people talking about us, and get the news media talking about us.

Certainly, to raise enough curiosity to increase traffic to Moose websites – and in this case, to direct traffic to what will be specially created website for this campaign and beyond – [www.heardofmoose.org](http://www.heardofmoose.org), which we've already purchased.

To be sure, also, we're seeking to increase pride among current members in the area where the campaign will be staged – and to improve member retention in the area as well.

And finally, certainly a goal of doing all this, is the big payoff: to generate a significant, measurable uptick in applications for Moose membership in the geographic area in which this program is staged – hopefully for the most part in existing local Moose operations, but getting them into General Assembly would be better than not getting them at all.

So – what geographic area are we talking about? The city of Tampa, the largest of the three major cities in the Tampa Bay metropolitan area, with its 4 million people – and of course, the site of our 2012 International Convention.

Why Tampa? Well, unavoidably, to debut a program like this, the fact that what should be a very-well-attended International Moose Convention will occur near the culmination of this campaign carries inherent advantages, most prominently in our ability to build in a major “Heard of Moose” public event in conjunction with the Convention, which we'll discuss shortly.

But there are plenty more reasons. The Tampa area is very much a target-rich audience for the Moose fraternity. We have fully 24 Moose facilities within a 50-mile radius of downtown Tampa. And frankly, a great majority of them are very good and attractive operations. Moreover, Tampa, with a mean age in the mid-40s, gives us what we feel is an ideal audience demographic.

The planned dates to roll out and execute this plan are April first through the end of July, a four-month period – of course, again with the 2012 International Convention taking place in Tampa between June 29 and July 5.

We're planning to undertake a fully integrated marketing approach, to a greater extent than this fraternity ever has before. We will be investing heavily in carefully and appropriately chosen paid advertising—combining outdoor advertising, commonly known as billboards, plus various types of transit advertising, focusing on Tampa's comprehensive municipal bus system . . . plus very inexpensive online and radio advertising, some newspaper advertising and a carefully timed special advertising insert in the city's major daily newspaper, the Tampa Tribune. We'll combine all these media with, of course, prudently practiced media relations, and the use of our new social media – primarily Facebook and perhaps Twitter as well.

Let's take a look at each of these components:

We're looking at multiple billboards along Tampa interstates and expressways – both traditional vinyl-surface billboards and the newer, brighter digital billboards. Also falling under this category of "outdoor advertising" are bus-shelter display advertising panels, which we'll also be utilizing . . .

In decades past, municipal bus advertising was limited to placards in frames either on the sides or in back . . . but now, there are stretchy plastic substances that wrap an entire bus – for an extremely compelling and memorable effect. Inside, of course, are the more traditional card advertisements above the window line.

Turning to more traditional media, we'll be looking to the Tampa Tribune, with a Sunday circulation of more than 600,000. In addition to a moderate amount of "Heard of Moose?" ads that would likely run during May and June, we'll also be pursuing a run-of-press newsprint color insert, which would be solely devoted to material on the Moose and the forthcoming International Convention, on a Sunday shortly before the Convention.

Radio continues to be a cost-effective way of getting our message out; producing radio is especially inexpensive. We're looking at roughly 300, thirty-second spots over the 16-week period, most likely on these three selected stations.

TBO-dot-com is the website of the Tampa Tribune, and in conjunction with the advertising we'll be taking in their print edition, we'll be planning a banner-ad presence on TBO-dot-com.

All of this paid advertising will, fortunately, inevitably create plenty of "buzz" within the northwest-Florida media community . . . and we plan to put ourselves in position to take full advantage of it. We'll be ready by March 2012 with a comprehensive and well-designed Media Kit, which will include news-release materials on our "Heard of Moose" campaign launch, along with fact sheets on the fraternity, on Mooseheart and Moosehaven, on the Tommy Moose program and other Community Service endeavors, and a sheet on how interested folks might pursue membership – either in a local Lodge/Chapter or in General Assembly. Additionally, we'll be pitching potential stories to all Tampa-area media, feature stories for which we'd want to be focusing on north-Florida Moose members and their initiatives.

Next, moving to the endless-possibilities medium that is the Internet. As I mentioned, Information Systems Director Eric Vonhoff has already purchased the rights to both [HeardOfMoose.org](http://HeardOfMoose.org), and [HeardOfMoose.com](http://HeardOfMoose.com) (to serve as a so-called "re-direct" address).

HeardOfMoose.org is of course the site that will be referenced in all of the advertising pieces, both in print and broadcast – it will have a similar graphic look and feel to all of the advertising pieces – and it will explain, simply and in an upbeat way, about the basics of what we do – and will offer information as to how viewers can become more involved – through donation to Moose Charities, or preferably, by seeking a sponsor to join. We will obviously make sure that the language and references we use do not constitute direct solicitation, which would run us afoul of the IRS or the courts.

Additionally, we would have a HeardOfMoose campaign-specific Facebook page, targeting both current members and potential new members.

Now – this is not going to be a Moose International-administered program only . . . it CANNOT be, if it is going to be as effective as possible. No, we are going to enlist the involvement of the Florida- Bermuda Moose Association . . . and most certainly and specifically those 24 Moose operations that are within the 50-mile radius of downtown Tampa. We'll be developing a HeardOfMoose Lodge Marketing Kit and getting it into the hands of the officers of at least those 24 Lodges – which would include a window and/or parking lot display matching the creative art of the interstate and expressway billboards. The kit would also include newspaper advertising templates, and local PR materials such as news-release templates, sheets with key messages and best answers for Frequently Asked Questions, and more . . . you see, none of this works very well unless YOU can “close the sale” at the local level, and we're going to do what we can to help you do it.

Because the 2012 International Convention will take place in Tampa during the first week of July – roughly three-quarters of the way through this campaign . . . we're going to take full advantage of that fact by planning a Public Open House on a weekend afternoon-and-evening of the Convention – complete with entertainment, information counters with representatives armed with membership applications, and refreshments. We'll be planning to heavily promote this during the three weeks or so immediately prior to the event, possibly with “rolling billboards” such as what you see here.

Please note that the advertising artwork you've been seeing in these panels has NOT been decided upon; it's just one concept on the Heard Of Moose theme. We will solicit proposals from at least a few different designers to evaluate how we can best communicate our message visually.

But . . . none of this makes sense until we've done our homework beforehand – which is already underway. After we see some initial creative concepts, we'll conduct appropriate focus groups to see what most effectively communicates our message.

And perhaps more importantly – shortly before hitting the market with this campaign, we'll conduct a formalized and updated survey poll in greater Tampa to determine our awareness levels for the Moose fraternity, and the metropolitan area's perceptions of our organization.

After the media campaign has concluded late next summer, we'll then conduct ANOTHER survey to determine the uptick in awareness; to find out just how successful we were in raising awareness and acceptance; we'll also determine which venues, which media, were most effective.

And we'll make sure we have mechanisms in place to track what we would certainly hope would be an uptick in new-member applications – with a consistent question to be asked of new candidates for months to follow: “How did you hear about the Moose?”

And a huge part of our longer-term objective with all this is to use what we learn in Tampa, next spring and summer . . . to intelligently put together a long-term plan for packaged public-awareness campaigns that could be put into place,

with minor modifications, in any other metro area in North America. Whether we have a package available for “sale at cost” to individual associations, or we seek to consistently set aside resources at Moose International for these kinds of programs on an ongoing basis, we don’t yet know.

So that’s what we’re planning. Yes, it’s a significant investment. But we have come to believe that it is the kind of investment that we must be prepared to make on an ongoing basis in the years to come, if the Moose fraternity is going to effectively remain in the public eye, and to grow as much as we need to grow, to keep doing all the good that we do as a fraternity, in the years and decades ahead.

That’s all the time I have this morning, and thanks very much!